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CIA/RR-CB-61-39

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20 July 1961

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## CURRENT SUPPORT BRIEF

1961 CROP PROSPECTS IN THE EUROPEAN SATELLITES

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

This report represents the immediate views of the originating intelligence components of the Office of Research and Reports. Comments are solicited.

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1961 CROP PROSPECTS IN THE EUROPEAN SATELLITES\*

The pre-harvest prospects for small grains (wheat, rye, barley, and oats) in the European Satellites in 1961 are good. The total Satellite harvest of small grains, which began in mid-June in Albania and is moving northward as the season progresses, is expected to exceed both the harvest of 1960 and the average production during 1956-60, unless harvesting losses are unusually high. Soil moisture to date has been ample for good plant growth, although in several cases, particularly in Czechoslovakia and East Germany, rainfall has been excessive. While the condition of the major fall harvested crops (potatoes, sugar beets, and corn) currently appears good, production is still very much dependent upon weather during the interim before harvest.

The variance of crop conditions among countries at this time appears to be less than in recent years. Reports from U.S. Embassies and Legations in the Satellites have indicated favorable crop conditions. 1/ Albania's three year drought was broken by rains last fall and spring. With a 56-percent increase in the area sown in wheat, 2/ the production of small grains in that country could reach the previous postwar high level of 1957. Small grains in Poland were reportedly in "excellent" condition in June, and those in Bulgaria, Hungary, and Rumania were reportedly "average to good."

Crop prospects in Czechoslovakia and East Germany are less favorable. Heavy rains last fall delayed sowing and retarded early growth of the winter grains. In Czechoslovakia, the winter grain area was 5 percent less than that in 1959. 3/ Rains in both countries were heavy again in May and June, causing delays in cultivating row crops and thinning sugar beets, possible reductions in the areas planted in potatoes and sugar beets, flooding in some bottom lands, extensive damage to early cuttings of hay, and lodging\*\* of grains. 4/ With the organizational problems in East Germany, the labor shortage, and the dependence upon mechanical harvesters in both East Germany and Czechoslovakia, harvesting losses are expected to be higher than usual.

Although it is likely that the European Satellites will have a good grain harvest, it will not satisfy all of their requirements. Therefore, the Satellites -- mainly Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Poland -- will continue to be net importers of large quantities of grain during 1961/62.

\* This report is based on weather information available through 30 June 61 and other information available to the date of publication.  
 \*\* Lodging refers to plants that have fallen over from wind and/or rain.

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